

**CITIZENS
AGAINST
GOVERNMENT
WASTE**

Thomas A. Schatz
President

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AUG 14 2007

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Mr. Kevin J. Martin
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Martin,

In December 2006, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopted a *Ninth Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* that provides for a national and centralized approach to maximize public safety access to interoperable, broadband spectrum in the 700 MHz band. This proposal would implement congressional directives on interoperability for first responders and other public safety groups. The Council for Citizens Against Government Waste (CCAGW) urges the FCC to adopt these rules as soon as possible.

After the tragedy on September 11, 2001 and other national disasters, our nation realized the importance in developing an advanced and completely interoperable public safety communications system. The FCC proposed rule would help establish such a nationwide network based on the current allotment of spectrum in the 700 MHz band.

The Digital Television Transition and Public Safety (DTV) Act gave public safety 24 MHz of prime spectrum in the valuable 700 MHz band and \$1 billion in funding to meet public safety's needs for interoperability. The remaining 60 MHz of spectrum was to be auctioned off to reduce the deficit.

But Cyren Call petitioned the FCC to abandon this carefully crafted agreement and asked the FCC to give away 30 MHz free to an unspecified group of federal, state and local officials, who would then hire a private company to build a for-profit network. Cyren Call hoped to avoid having to bid for this spectrum, planning to be paid instead to create this new network. The FCC wisely rejected this petition.

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Cyren Call is now going to Congress to try to undo FCC's decision. Telecommunications spectrum is an asset owned by the taxpayers. The DTV Act correctly requires that it be auctioned off, not given away. Now is the time for first responders to get their 24 MHz and for taxpayers to receive billions of dollars a spectrum auction would bring in to the U.S. Treasury. We applaud the FCC's decision to both dismiss the Cyren Call proposal and uphold the provisions for auctioning off the spectrum found in the DTV Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Schatz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, sweeping "T" and a long, trailing flourish at the end.